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A motocross rider in a yellow and black jersey with 'KEIT', 'MAHA', and 'SWORTH' on the sleeve is celebrating with his right arm raised in a 'rock on' gesture. In the background, another rider on a bike with number '122' is visible, along with a person standing near a white tent. The scene is set at a motocross event under a cloudy sky.

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MX2 GP WINNER

LOMMEL, BELGIUM



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MotoGP

The highs to the lows...

Shortly after swiping the record from countryman Loris Capirossi for the longest winning career in Grand Prix – a mammoth eighteen years and twenty-seven days – Valentino Rossi was given another reminder about how fickle the sport can be. The Italian needed medical treatment on a bump to the head after his Aragon crash

Photo by Martin Heath







Gutting...

For a moment OTOR is going to wallow. Aside from Team France's emphatic victory a major story from the 68th Motocross of Nations was how Team GBR came so close to a podium finish for the first time this century. A stronger chain link, tighter oil cap or just one more race position from either Tommy Searle, Shaun Simpson or Dean Wilson would have made Kegums even more memorable...

Photo by Ray Archer





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GAUTIER PAULIN GOES 1-1
AT THE MXoN

ON TOP OF THE WORLD





MX

2014 MONSTER ENERGY MOTOCROSS

KEGUMS, LATVIA · SEPTEMBER 28th · 68th EDITION

Final standing: France, Belgium, United States

MXGP winner: Gautier Paulin, Kawasaki

MX2 winner: Tommy Searle, Kawasaki

MX Open winner: Steven Frossard, Kawasaki

VIVE

By Adam Wheeler, photos by Ray Archer

CROSS of NATIONS

2014 MXoN



PLAY

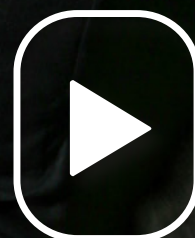
Unlike Team France the 2014 Motocross of Nations took a while to get going. On Friday morning a cold, misty Kegums circuit was desolate. Maybe it was natural for the majority of spectators and fans who were hiking from the west to the first edition of this event outside of central Europe since the 2010 incarnation at Lakewood in Colorado. By Sunday the place was rammed and it seemed like there were motocross people wherever you walked in the nearby capital city of Riga.

The outstanding elements of this 68th edition? You cannot escape the form of Gautier Paulin, Dylan Ferrandis and Steven Frossard. The atmosphere and expectation around the action Sunday lunchtime somehow seemed to warm the moderate temperatures. The Kegums sand appeared softer and rougher than typically found there for the Grand Prix. "I think it was the perfect track for the Motocross of Nations and hopefully we can have more like this," said Paulin, now a four-time moto winner at the biggest MX race of the year. "It shows something good when the guy who starts at the front doesn't necessarily stay there and the guy who starts near the back can make forward progress if he is good enough."

Scrutinised and deliberated in some sections of the French press the trio each had question marks over their heads while the likes of Marvin Musquin (an AMA national race winner again this year) and Jordi Tixier kicked their heels in the wings. Tixier at least made the trip to Latvia but I didn't get the chance to offer a penny for his thoughts as we both stood on one of the jumps to watch the start of the second moto. Paulin had removed some of the scepticism over his sixth consecutive selection with some impressive speed at the Grand Prix of Leon in Mexico two weeks previously as well as good form at Lommel in August and also Goias, Brazil. He took the same loose-limbed and joyful riding style from South America directly into the sand. To see '21' with both wheels speed-drifting into some of the sandy berms on Sunday was a powerful image.



2014 MXoN



PLAY

Frossard was the picture of consistency with a 2-4 scorecard at Kegums after an inconsistent season; his irregularity was one of the factors in the loss of his factory Kawasaki saddle for 2015. It is Frossard's disillusion and current state of flux (despite an initial alleged tie to the Wilvo Forkrent KTM team for 2015) that hung over his demeanour and tempered his joy at contributing to France's second ever Nations success.

Ferrandis was firmly in the spotlight in the MX2 role with at least three other capable athletes able to comfortably play the same part. The debutant had some pressure, as did selector Olivier Robert who opted for the CLS Monster Energy Kawasaki rider's tenacity and outward determination as a deciding factor. Ferrandis kept on two wheels – something that has been difficult for the nineteen year old in recent Grands Prix – and his 9-9 was the foundation on which France looked to more glory on the 450s. "I knew from the beginning that the other guys were going for the win whereas I'd just have to push hard for the best position and that's what I did," he explained. "I thought on Saturday that we were sure to be on the podium because I knew the work we had done during the week and the spirit of the crew. I was sure about what we could do. When I was watching the last moto I knew it would be good for us. With Gautier first and Steven fourth it was just the perfect result and we won by so many points."

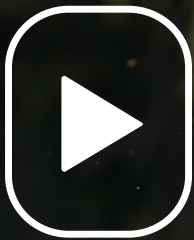
France served up a winning margin of ten points along with hefty slices of humble pie for their critics.

Belgium were present in the top three, as ever, with second place and it is incredible to think that the 'Red Devils' have missed the box only twice since the end of the 1980s. Yamaha's Jeremy Van Horebeek defied a bent gear lever and a re-twisted right ankle to go 4-2 and Rockstar Suzuki's Kevin Strijbos was a deserved winner of the second moto squashed in between the Paulin Show. The kind of pace the 28 year old showed has been unveiled in flashes during the 2014 MXGP term but rarely seen

in double bursts. Kevin would suffer the same contrast at Kegums and a stall and small crash in the last race forced a frantic climb through the pack to reach ninth. Van Horebeek commented that rookie Julien Lieber was suffering with nerves on Saturday and an engine failure in the qualification heat hardly helped to ease his anxiety on a stage where the slightest mistake can carry heavy penalties with positions and points. Like Ferrandis Lieber did what was required and his eleventh in the second moto was a classification the Belgians could bank.

Ah, Great Britain. At one stage the Brits were threatening the Belgians thanks to the great starts by Monster Energy Kawasaki duo (CLS and Pro Circuit) Tommy Searle and Dean Wilson. Searle clinched the MX2 category vacated by Ken Roczen after four years of ownership and also on the day by Red Bull KTM's Tony Cairoli. The Sicilian's speed was ridiculous as he mocked the MXGP riders during the first part of the opening moto. Getting up to third he hit his left foot entering a rut in the waves section - an area in which the eight times world champion is usually so strong – and was pitched off the factory 250SX-F, hurting his right knee. Italy would finish fifth but this was a forgettable day for MXGP's supreme athlete after two Nations of dominance on the 350SX-F. Searle staked his claim and wore the air of relief and elation for the first time in 2014 in what has been a frustrating slog for the former GP winner. Wilson had a personal best at the Nations with a 3-5 and was excellent. Pity and sentiment were reserved for Shaun Simpson. A dislodged oil cap and snapped chain meant his sole finish of thirteenth placed the Britons one position and one point away from a deserved and long overdue podium. Simpson was seven laps from the chequered flag in the final moto and watched from pitlane to see if Team USA and Eli Tomac and Ryan Dungey might slip up in their recovery from first lap crashes. In the end the deadlock in the points was decided by Tomac's very fine effort to reach third spot.

Some of the super-aura that surrounds Team USA has vanished at this meeting in recent years.



PLAY

2014 MXoN



Crashes for both Martin (5) and Cairoli meant that Kegums never saw a battle between the only 2014 champions in action





The large entourage and fenced-off 'American' areas seem to be a thing of the past – thankfully, and the fans clearly appreciate it - and some of the prolificacy of the likes of Cairli, Roczen and now Paulin has signified that the most decorated country to have graced the competition are not head-and-shoulders above their international rivals. Certainly not like they once were.

Jeremy Martin's broken foot, Eli Tomac's set-up issues that blunted his capabilities in the first moto and the puzzlement over Ryan Dungey's ongoing inability to find the chequered flag first (no co-incidence that Team USA have not won since the KTM rider's last victory in 2011) were some of the setbacks. Tomac was a powerful force in the last moto but he started it by picking the Geico Honda off the floor of the first turn for the second time that weekend. At no stage did it look like the Americans were capable of taking a moto victory and from that basis they were continually counting points and watching others. "I never thought I would see the day when the French would win the Motocross of Nations on a sand track," admitted Team Manager Roger De Coster. "It was

impressive, they deserved 100% to win and they rode like champions. You guys make it difficult for me to go back to the States and say we were third behind you and the Belgians but a big congratulations."

"I would always accept the opportunity to represent my country and would never turn it down," offered Ryan Dungey. "If anybody has something to say then there are plenty of other riders out there who have passed on the opportunity. I am proud to be here every year and I give it my best. It doesn't always work out sometimes and in racing there are plenty of unpredictables."

The Nations missed Roczen. It also would have been richer for the presence of a fit Jeffrey Herlings and you can only imagine how the Americans might benefit from a Grand Prix-seasoned Ryan Villopoto at Ernee in 2015. Nevertheless the performances and level of skill on show is one reason why – crowd, nerves, expectation and pride aside – the Motocross of Nations is such a fantastically relevant and treasured occasion. A word of advice...book some hotels rooms now for Ernee.



Eli Tomac goes down on the first corner and the American had no reply to the speed of Suzuki's Kevin Strijbos (this page) in the second moto



2014 MXoN



Searle saved his best ride of the year for the time when it really mattered. It was also his last on a Kawasaki since coming back to Europe in 2010



Ferrandis silenced his doubters but
tweaked his ankle in the last moto.
The Frenchman will be a valid threat in
2015 on the CLS machine

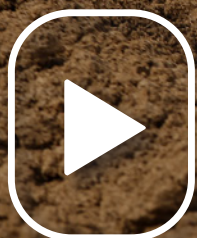






Tomac was all-action in the third and final moto after a revision of his suspension set-up on the Geico Honda. His ride from almost last to third was almost a show-stealer...

Not an easy first MXoN for Martin who ended up limping out of Latvia a day earlier than planned for surgery on his right foot



PLAY

Despite all his assertions of being happy to be back in Europe, Kegums was not a happy experience on the track for Chad Reed...



2014 MXoN





Clear vision for Dungey who has still to finish off the MXoN podium. A good ride for Max Nagl (right) helped the Germans to fifth overall



2014 MXoN







Like Tommy Searle, Dean Wilson was signing-off from a long Kawasaki tenure and did it in style with a 3-5. It was a personal best for the Scot who had to return to the U.S. to start testing for supercross right after Kegums



2014 MXoN FINAL CLASSIFICATION

MXGP OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Gautier Paulin, FRA	Kawasaki
2	Jeremy Van Horebeek, BEL	Yamaha
3	Aleksandr Tonkov, RUS	Husqvarna
4	Ryan Dungey, USA	KTM
5	Max Nagl, GER	Honda

MX2 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Tommy Searle, GBR	Kawasaki
2	Glenn Coldenhoff, NED	Suzuki
3	Dylan Ferrandis, FRA	Kawasaki
4	Jeremy Martin, USA	Yamaha
5	Julien Lieber, BEL	KTM

MX OPEN OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Steven Frossard, FRA	Kawasaki
2	Dean Wilson, GBR	Kawasaki
3	Eli Tomac, USA	Honda
4	Kevin Strijbos, BEL	Suzuki
5	Tanel Leok, EST	TM

FINAL STANDINGS

Nations	Points
1 France	17
2 Belgium	27
3 USA	33
4 Great Britain	33
5 Germany	72



A good day for Husqvarna's Alex Tonkov who already planted the seed for factory teams considering the Russian for an MXGP saddle once his work is done in MX2



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- STEFAN EVERTS
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THE BIG ONE...

By Adam Wheeler, photos by Marian Chytka

A perfectly groomed track, more concessions to a larger crowd and a shiny paddock infrastructure that drags MX closer to something resembling MotoGP; it is always easy to see when the Motocross of Nations comes around and why this annual event has become such a beacon, and a commodity for Youthstream since an explosion of intense interest in 2005 in Ernee, France.

Everything is bigger, brighter and less bashful at the Nations. Investments are made to cash-in on the one weekend where the off-road racing community seems to home in on a singular location. The difference is in the details. Even though a few national motorcycle federations typically decide to allocate a bare minimum amount of resources for some recognition and profile (what other motorsport discipline gives exposure to the flag apart from the ISDE?) there are still initiatives that mark the Nations out as something different. The Belgians, French, Americans have well-supported and backed programmes while teams like GBR put together schemes like the recent sofund.co.uk to generate more revenue to plug any holes in the budget.

It would be foolhardy to generalise how federations prioritise the Nations. Considering how some people and companies are only too happy to use 'racing' as an excuse to chop and reallocate funds, it is to the credit of the thirty four countries that rolled into Kegums that there were there at all. Some obviously treat it with a great deal of importance, others perhaps with grudging obligation. The farce over Harri Kullas' 'temporary defection' from a non-existent Finnish effort to represent Estonia being an example (Finland finally put a team together) while Spain still seem to make their riders take the long way

round when it comes to travelling and overall organisation.

I do think that Federations need to do more with the Nations. Somebody like Lithuania (to highlight a random case) might not challenge the likes of Dungey and co but the fact they are taking part in the spectacle is newsworthy (and thus publicity-worthy) in itself.



How often can somebody like the ACU in the UK actively engage in direct promotion of a national competitive effort - that is even complete with symbolic flags, liveries and colours - and the heightened interest of the specialist press? Hardly at all. The opportunities are not there. Maybe more should be done with the central figures of Searle, Simpson and Wilson and the 2014 British showcase for competitive motorcycle sport both before and after the event? Where are the press calls, photoshoots and build-up interviews?



There are no other occasions on the motorcycle racing calendar when motorsport moves out from being a discipline that is solely about the individual. Publications in the UK like Motorcycle News don't cover the Nations (maybe through snobbery or naivety) and yet a simple visit to any of the last twelve or thirteen editions I've seen will reveal a large passionate pocket of British fans unlike anything you'd find around the curves of Silverstone or Donington Park.

We're chatting about a minority and niche sport of course but if an archer can make national news around the time of a major athletics meeting because he or she is achieving distinction while wearing a union jack then where is the difference? Something, somewhere is a little amiss. An opportunity wasted. Maybe it is down to results. I'm sure there are a few more media sources in France running quotes or images from Kegums today and yesterday than originally planned.

More than the HD TV pictures and the inflated media attendance at the race itself there is potential around the Nations to make it grow even bigger but it has to come from the sum of its parts. A little imagination and effort can perhaps drive the occasion to new eyeballs and consciousness. There are little more inspiring sights than seeing a national flag waved in a competitive arena and the sheer amount of coverage, money and attention given to the likes of the World Cup and the Olympics is proof of that.



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IF IT'S BROKEN...

By Steve Matthes

Well, that's a wrap on another year of the Olympics of Motocross AKA the Motocross des Nations (is there anything worse than adding the "of" in there? I think not) and it's another year where the USA did not win. Since their first success in 1981 this winless streak is now tied for the longest consecutive shutout streak when the red, white and blue did send a team. In short, when Team USA enters this event it's only gone three years without a win once before. They did win that fourth year in 2000 when the race was held in France.

Let's dive a little deeper into Team USA's performances in this three-year streak and see what - if anything - the Yanks need to do to stop the losses and get back on top at this race.

Before we get into that let me be the first to congratulate the other red, white and blue of Team France for their second ever win at the MXDN. The team, who were under some fire for leaving Marvin Musquin and Jordi Tixier out, rose to the occasion and rode fantastically. Gautier Paulin, in particular, was incredible and France's win was well deserved. They were by far the fastest and most consistent nation in Kegums, Lativa and full marks for their victory.

Ok, back to Team USA. That this dry patch started in the deep sand of Lommel is not a surprise. The Americans were never going to win there. Hard to compete against the Europeans who live nearby and ride that track a lot as well as grow up riding in the sand. Just to make the podium there was an accomplishment.

Last year in Germany and this year in Latvia though these were tracks that Americans can handle. Kegums was certainly sandier than I thought it would be but it's a lot like Millville or RedBud in places. Just deeper. The sand devel-

oped roller bumps in them like the above-mentioned tracks but there was a hard enough base where choppy and square-edged braking bumps surfaced. Anyone who points to the surface as the reason why USA lost needs to come up with a plan for the loss last year in Germany.

One thing that the Americans might want to look at is putting its three best riders on the team regardless of cc specialty. This year Italy's Antonio Cairoli dropped down to a 250F to help his team and Jeremy Van Horebeek was scheduled to do it this year for Belgium. Of course Tommy Searle did it for Great Britain and came away with the overall win in MX2. For whatever reason the Americans don't like to do this or really even think of it. There were some murmurs of Eli Tomac going to the 250F and putting Trey Canard on the 450 but I'm told the USA never considered this an option.

Why not? Speed is speed and any rider on Team USA has extensive time on the 250 as well as support if they aren't on a team that races 250's. USA 250MX national champion Jeremy Martin wasn't able to be at his best due to a bad crash on Saturday so we never saw what he could do but bottom line is he crashed while in fifth in Saturday's qualifying race. It wasn't like he was running away with it. In past years Blake Baggett hasn't done as well as he or the team would've liked to and again, he was heroic for going out there but the record shows Martin was responsible for the two worst scores USA had. Whether it's the egos of the 450 stars or USA management not thinking outside the box, I'm not sure why this never happens. Johnny O'Mara, Jeff Ward and Bob Hannah all did it in the 80's and helped USA to wins and certainly Cairoli's move looked like it was going to work out well until he crashed.



And Great Britain, with Searle on the small bike, was in position to beat USA until late in the last moto when a chain broke.

In speaking to Roger DeCoster after the race the American team manager made no excuses or passed on any blame but I did find this comment interesting as to one theory he has on what's been going on with the American team: "There's so much pressure on our guys also at this event. We have such a big entourage and I think we need to look a little bit at the fact that we have too many opinions, too many experts talking to the riders trying to tell them what they should be doing. I think these guys are too good to keep being told all day "you need to go win." Today these guys, if they're going to come here they want to win. We need to back off a little bit, let them do their job and trust that they're going to do as good as they can do."

Decoster hints at pressure on the riders from all the people that surround them. The size of Team USA has become a bit of an eyebrow raiser for many of the European teams and press and I have to admit I'm in agreement with this. As a former member of Team USA in 2003 as a mechanic for Tim Ferry, I remember we had about ten people total for all three riders. Nowadays there seems to be about triple that number and while the support is nice, Roger's theory about everyone bending the ears of the riders could be true. Perhaps closing the ranks off a little bit, bringing Team USA all under one tent (for the past four or five years the American riders have been pitting with the OEM's that help them out), adapting a bit more solidarity among the team and a guerilla attitude might help.

And again there is the James Stewart question... isn't there always a James Stewart question in our sport? There's no doubt that Stewart is one

of the very best riders we have in America but yet there's never any chance he gets picked for the team. Why is that? Stewart's gone on record as saying that DeCoster doesn't like him, he doesn't like Roger and that's why he'll never get to go. Stewart recently told me that he's open to going, he's fine with Roger but he doesn't think he'll ever get picked. Of course many times Stewart hasn't made it to the end of the series to be healthy enough to be selected and of course this year he's missed the last half of the USA nationals for...well, I don't really know. And he's got this FIM provisional suspension for testing positive for amphetamines in supercross hanging over him right now. So I get it, he brings some baggage with him and perhaps DeCoster just doesn't want to deal with it.

But Stewart's ridden and won for Team USA before and although not as dominant as he was years ago he still went 1-1 at a national this year and won a bunch of supercrosses. He's one of the fastest riders to ever throw a leg over a bike and if he's healthy, he should be in the mix to go but DeCoster doesn't even look at him.

And in a way the Stewart question goes back to putting a 450 guy on a small bike. Would anyone bet against a Team USA of Ryan Villopoto, Ryan Dungey and James Stewart with one of them in the MX2 class? Because I can tell you that without a doubt those are the three fastest motocross riders Team USA would ever have had.

I don't have all the answers (or perhaps none!) but one loss is a fluke, two is an accident but three losses is, to me, a trend. Perhaps it's time for a Team USA overhaul and a second look at the way things are done?



NO SHO

Some see life as a challenging track
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RT CUTS



THE COUNTRY



By Adam Wheeler, photos by Ray Archer

THE LAST RACE, LAST LAPS DISPUTE THAT DECIDED THE
2014 MX2 FIM MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WAS A
REMARKABLE AND TENSE TIME FOR THE RED BULL KTM TEAM.
HERE IS HOW THEY DEALT WITH IT...IN THEIR OWN WORDS

DOWN

THE TEAM

Dirk Gruebel, Technical Co-ordinator:

Jovial and stoic German. General overseer of all technical matters across the board with Red Bull KTM.

Valentina Ragni, Team Co-ordinator:

Long-term KTM employee, frantically busy 'face' of the team with all parties in the paddock

Stefan Everts Red Bull KTM MX2 Team Manager:

Former World Champion and record holder. With KTM since 2007 and guiding influence for both Jeffrey Herlings and Jordi Tixier. Brother-in-law Ruben works as Herlings' practice mechanic

Rami Fält, Jeffrey Herlings' mechanic:

The Dutchman's mechanic for the past two years. Unmovable Fin with a direct view on the world

Wayne Banks, Jordi Tixier's mechanic:

Two years with Tixier and characteristic Aussie mixing laid-back demeanour with fierce passion for his job



JULY 12-13th

In qualification on Saturday for the Grand Prix of Finland at Hyvinkää Jordi Tixier would crash in the sand and nurse a headache and black eye for the rest of the weekend. The race would be the scene of yet another confident 'romp' for Jeffrey Herlings as the champion posted his tenth win in a row and ninth perfect 1-1 moto haul. Tixier salvaged a podium finish with third place; his fifth trophy on the bounce. The gap in the championship between the team-mates was 145 points with 200 left to take. KTM were already planning title celebrations for Herlings at round fourteen of seventeen in two weeks time at Loket for the Grand Prix of Czech Republic. Tixier, who only managed a best result of sixth place from the first four rounds, learns shortly after Hyvinkää that he will not be part of the French Motocross of Nations team.

Gruebel: "Jordi struggled big-time at the start of the year and could not get in his rhythm in the overseas races. He doubted himself and doubted the bikes and was unsure of everything. We had a couple of talks and then I explained that he had to go out and have fun and do it his own way. There was only so much we could do and he turned it around. It was the same story last year and we took away some pressure. He thought we had sky-high expectations and we do but we don't push for it. If it happens it happens. Pressure doesn't help anybody."

Tixier: "When I can feel pressure then I think too much about how I'm riding and what I have to do. I get too tight on the track and enter corners thinking 'I don't want to crash'. Sometimes you have to think 'f**k: just go for it'. You might make a mistake or fall off but it's the way I have to do it."



JULY 19-20th

Herlings snaps his left femur after crashing while riding a KTM 85cc as part of a demo ride at the 'Everts and Friends' Charity event at Genk, Belgium.

Everts: "If you look back at the last eight or nine years then they have been quite smooth, nice and successful but this year has been a strange one with this injury and how it happened, especially for myself because I am the organiser of the charity race. I always ask many riders to come along and if they say 'no' then I accept that. Jeffrey has been there for a few years and not been riding every time but when he did he was on the 85. It was the worst thing that I could imagine happening at the event. There is a big chance he will lose the championship. It is bad."

Ragni: "Jeffrey was very down but we had to stress that nobody was disappointed or angry with him."

Gruebel: "Jeffrey has had some ups and downs and rode very well once he was back from in-

jury after Brazil. He caught and passed Tonus and made a big points lead until unfortunately breaking his leg."

Everts: "We do the event for good causes and my initial reason was to try and do something positive with our sport because we get a lot of unnecessary coverage like the noise and pollution so this was a way to do something nice for the kids and to bring them to the event. We want to give the money away to families, kids and charities that need it. The only intention is to do something positive with the sport. The event is now quite big and had a positive feeling about it until this negative thing with Jeffrey. The critics can start to shoot and it is tough for me and I have to live with it. I just feel so bad for Jeffrey."

Ragni: "It became a weird situation because Jeffrey had the title in his pocket and even Jordi was quite relaxed that he was looking good to be second again. The injury turned everything upside down. Jordi started to go really fast."

JULY 27th

Tixier responds to increased pressure on his role for the 2014 championship story by winning his first ever Grand Prix on the slippery hard-pack of Loket in the Czech Republic. He later states publicly that the championship should still be Herlings'. It emerges that KTM will not offer him another place in the factory team for 2015 and he confirms an agreement with CLS Monster Energy Kawasaki. The points deficit in the standings lowers to 102 with three rounds to go.

Everts: "Jordi didn't make that step at all at the beginning of the year. At Brazil [round three] he was there alone, without Jeffrey, and didn't shine. He had his problems last year also...but now I think he has made his step and knows how to deal with it."

Ragni: "Jordi is a nice boy but it is a shame he showed his potential only when his team-mate was injured and his place in the team was unsure. Some people could say 'why now and not before?'. Jeffrey was giving 200% all the time."

Everts: "I've tried to teach him for the last years. I think handling pressure is a point where he can still be a lot stronger. I like to work with riders on weak points and this is not something you can correct in two months. It is a process you have to go through for some years. I have explained all along about how I believed he could be stronger and it seems it is making a breakthrough at the right moment."

Fält: "The hardest point [for me] was Loket. It was the turning point. I knew then if Jordi was going for it or not. Sometimes they said he was mentally not that strong and there was a lot of pressure there so I was wondering if he might crash. It was confusing to watch but I have to say Jordi was really strong. It is all about getting the points."

Gruebel: [On maybe Tixier taking the No.1 plate away from KTM] "That is a bit sad. If Jordi wins the championship then we'll have it twice with Ken Roczen winning [and leaving] also. It is sad but that's the situation. We have a good group of people and the atmosphere makes a big difference. The riders feel at home and there is no stress. The mechanics get on well. I know that Ken was having his doubts. I was over for Unadilla and I could see he was thinking about it. If he wrapped up the title then he knew he was taking it away from a bike and a team that he liked and that wanted him. It was his decision. If the bike is not good for him in 2015 then the pressure is on him. It is a tough situation for these guys [Tixier and Herlings] as well. Jordi's situation is a bit different. It was set by KTM and in another time when the standings were not like this. You cannot predict anything in racing!"

Fält: "I think that [talking about 2014 belonging to Herlings in the press conference] was Jordi's way of taking the pressure off himself. If he starts saying 'it is my time and I am going to take it' then he might f**k it up."



Banks: "I think Loket was a relief and it was something off his shoulders. OK, Jeffrey wasn't there but he sees himself as the next guy who should win. He proved himself in Czech Republic."

AUGUST 3rd

Round fifteen of seventeen. Tixier unexpectedly bags good points and second place overall in the sand of Lommel in Belgium. Herlings, on crutches, watches the races. His lead in the standings falls to 57. KTM are now confirmed as champions in MX2 as only Tixer and Herlings can grasp the title.

Tixier: "It is quite difficult for me at the moment and I am trying hard not to think about the championship otherwise I won't ride well. A lot of people send me messages and texts to say 'you can be world champion' and I know I can do it."



Ragni: "It is a KTM win...but it will be sad for Jeffrey and hard for him and everybody to accept. Nobody will be saying that he failed or did something wrong. This is motocross – they don't play chess – and these injuries can happen any time."

Banks: "We were all hoping that Jordi could step up when he was the only rider in the awning. It was good to see him ride like he can in the races where he had to deliver."

Ragni: "Since his team-mate has been injured he [Jordi] has started to show what he can do and pretty much what we expected since the start of the year."

THE COUNTDOWN: KTM & MX2



Everts: "It is a strange situation but I try to be 100% behind Jordi as well as Jeffrey and when they need me then I am there for both of them. I cannot run between the both of them revealing things and, sometimes, have to have their confidence like a doctor or lawyer would! You have to respect both riders and from what I have seen both have been handling it very professionally and positively. Overall, though it is awkward."





SEPTEMBER 7th

The cancelled Grand Prix of Ukraine means that MXGP shuts down for four weeks, giving Herlings valuable recovery time. Despite some prior rumours to the contrary he does not show for the penultimate round in Goias, Brazil. His '84' machine and mechanic have travelled. The champion has faced a delay in his recuperation after contracting a stomach virus for almost a fortnight.

Fält: "I did not expect him to make it...but I hoped so much."

Gruebel: "It is desperate. Jeffrey was so disappointed. He wanted to be here and defending his title. The injury took its toll and an infection wiped away two weeks of training. He would be the last guy to say: "I'm not coming, I don't feel 100%". I'm sure he would be here even if he was 60%."

Banks: "There was no way to know what will happen with Jeffrey. He has been injured a cou-

ple of times this season. When we started the year it was both of our aims to go for the title. OK the first three rounds did not go as plan..."

Things do not go to plan for Tixier who crashes on Saturday at the new circuit of Trindade in Brazil. On Sunday he rides to fifth and fourth positions and misses the podium for the first time in seven Grands Prix. He now rests 23 points adrift. Herlings, who during the weekend tweets 'Losing is one thing... Not being able to defend yourself is something else' watches at home and is willed to get back on the bike and runs practice motos on Wednesday and Thursday in the week before making the last minute decision to fly to Mexico.

Gruebel: "Jordi has a direction and Jeffrey has his; there is not really a fight between the two. Jeffrey was really the leader and Jordi was in an underdog situation and he handled it well. It feels like the pressure is creeping up on him and he is really close to a world title."

Ragni: “Between them the relationship has been good all the time. They like to share a joke and Jeffrey tends to be the crazy one while Jordi laughs a lot. Jeffrey motivates Jordi and when he got injured I know they swapped some nice messages. Personally I think Jordi has always been relaxed knowing that Jeffrey was the winner and he was the ‘back-up’. Now a new world has been opened up for him. I don’t think there are any bad feelings there.”

Fält: “When you are away from the track you can be sitting in the hotel and thinking away. You don’t want any bad luck to come Wayne and Jordi’s way but if they could just lose a few more points or get passed by some other riders...! When you are at the races then you think in a different way. I was watching at Brazil and I was pleased that Jordi was riding OK...at the same time I was adding the points in my head.”

Herlings: “Before the Grand Prix in Brazil I was not planning to ride until I had totally recovered and then in Brazil he didn’t do so well. He had a lot of pressure on him whereas I’m kinda used to that now. I was going for my third championship and had faced bigger fires.”

Ragni: “When you win with a round or two to go then it makes everything much easier. You are relaxed and you have won. The situation now – for me – is tense more than it is exciting. Everybody has conflicting emotions...except of course for Wayne! There is not a super-happy atmosphere. The first thing that you want is that your riders are healthy. On Sunday night in Mexico we will be happy that we won but at the moment it is like we are missing a big part of the team.”

Gruebel: “For the brand and the team we cannot be happier to have riders in the situations we have now. We have been spoilt in the last couple of years because we always wrapped it up with a couple of rounds to go. Now there is a bit more drama involved. For the nerves it is not good and you can feel some tension building up in the team.”

THE COUNTDOWN: KTM & MX2



SEPTEMBER 13th

Tixier flies to Pole Position as Herlings limps into the paddock in Leon and struggles to post a fast lap. The reigning no.1 goes to hospital straight after the qualification heat race (in which he completed two circulations) for an x-ray on a painful leg muscle as a result of knocking the limb during his mid-week practice. The scans show the femur has still not fully knitted and the pin that had been inserted in July is the main strut of strength in the limb. Tixier is collected and purposeful. Recent news of younger brother Leo suffering temporary paralysis due to a BMX accident gives the Frenchman focus.

Banks: "Stuff was being planned to celebrate Jeffrey's win in the Czech Republic so to be close to it here has been such a big turnaround. It is good for the sport. It would be better if the points were closer but then it would be better also if both riders were healthy."

Fält: "This is good for the public. If Jeffrey had won the title in Loket then maybe he would have done the last few races in MXGP for something different. It is exciting for TV. I think I will be really disappointed [if we don't win] but if Jeffrey really goes for it and I can see in his eyes that he has done what he can then that will be OK and the feeling will be different."

Herlings: "All the doctors said I should not go except for one really good one in Belgium who said there was a possibility, but whenever I'd put my foot on the ground or hit a jump then I would die with the pain."

Ragni: "It is a double emotion for me because I work closely with both of them and with Jeffrey a lot because he had been with us since he was fifteen. Sometimes he likes to joke and



say to me 'Mum 2'; I feel very sorry for him. I try to be equal to both but Jordi often has his family around him and his own atmosphere. Jeffrey has us and Ruben."

Everts: "On one side it should have been Jeffrey's championship because he has dominated like he did before and he is the fastest. On the other hand to see Jordi becoming this complete rider and something I have helped him and his family with is really good. His father deserves a lot of credit for the level of support he provides. It is good to see that our strategy has worked because we brought Jordi into the team to have a 1-2 in the series and now he is ready to step up and be the number one. I think we have done a good job because both riders have been ready to win and both can be in front of the rest."

Banks: "There are 23 points but it all can change so quickly. It is quite a big gap but nobody knows how Jeffrey is feeling. It is Jeffrey's to lose and all Jordi can do is try to win. I think Jordi is still the underdog because of that gap."





SEPTEMBER 14th

The underdog triumphs in spite of near misses, chewing a Russian's right arm in his rear wheel and a scintillating finale that sees the team-mates tied on 614 championship points with four laps of a six-month, seventeen-race, fifteen-country and thirty-four motos season to go. Tixier earns his first title and KTM's sixth in a row since 2008 by just four points with a 1-3 performance while Herlings tearfully does his best to 14-10.

Tixier: "I tried to block him [Herlings] out totally....but it was pretty difficult because he was based only a few metres away! The doctors and people were around him all the time. His face was not so good and he looked nervous...but so was I; so much so before the second moto. I wanted to ride like I do in training and I did it this weekend."

Fält: "You work for it all year and it is so close but then you lose it."

Herlings: "Anything can happen in motocross. He is World Champion and I'm not but I know I was the fastest guy and dominated all season. In my heart I know I was the best. But credit to Jordi. He really shocked me and did a great job."

Banks: "There are two sides to winning. You have to be here every weekend and that is what Jordi has done."

Fält: "It was not your usual Grand Prix! Both Wayne and I were hoping for the title but at the end of the day it was not up to us. We just do the work like we normally do."

Herlings: "I am going to lie on the couch for two months!"





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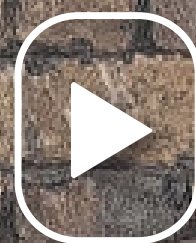
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MotoGP



AG

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PLAY

BACK AGAINST IT

JORGE LORENZO FINALLY FOUND HIS WAY TO THE FOUNTAIN IN SPAIN AND AT ARAGON THERE WAS CERTAINLY ENOUGH WATER. A DRY STRETCH GOING ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE LAST GP OF 2013 FOR THE YAMAHA RIDER ENDED WITH VICTORY IN ANOTHER EYEBROW-RAISING MOTOGP EVENT...

Photos by Martin Heath - www.martinheathphoto.com

Marc Marquez's season of almost-perfection has hit a few bumps in recent weeks. Lorenzo's first win of the year was also the tenth in a row by Spanish riders in MotoGP on Spanish soil



MotoGP ARA



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CLASSIFICATION & CHAMPIONSHIP

MotoGP RESULT

Riders		
1	Jorge Lorenzo, SPA	Yamaha
2	Aleix Espargaro, SPA	FWD Yamaha
3	Cal Crutchlow, GBR	Ducati
4	Stefan Bradl, GER	Honda
5	Bradley Smith, GBR	Yamaha

MotoGP CHAMPIONSHIP AFTER 14 of 18 ROUNDS

Riders		Points
1	Marc Marquez	292
2	Dani Pedrosa	217
3	Valentino Rossi	214
4	Jorge Lorenzo	202
5	Andrea Dovizioso	142

Moto2 RESULT

Riders		
1	Maverick Viñales, SPA	Kalex
2	Esteve Rabat, SPA	Kalex
3	Johann Zarco, FRA	Cat. Suter
4	Thomas Luthi, SUI	Suter
5	Franco Morbidelli, ITA	Kalex

Moto2 CHAMPIONSHIP AFTER 14 of 18 ROUNDS

Riders		Points
1	Esteve Rabat	278
2	Mika Kallio	245
3	Maverick Viñales	204
4	Dominique Aegerter	143
5	Thomas Luthi	116



Moto3 RESULT

Riders		
1	Romano Fenati, ITA	KTM
2	Alex Marquez, SPA	Honda
3	Danny Kent, GBR	Husqvarna
4	Alex Rins, SPA	Honda
5	Jakub Kornfeil, CZE	KTM

Moto3 CHAMPIONSHIP AFTER 14 of 18 ROUNDS

Riders		Points
1	Alex Marquez	206
2	Jack Miller	195
3	Alex Rins	188
4	Romano Fenati	165
5	Efren Vazquez	154

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WIRE REACHING...

By Matthew Roberts



Two crashes for Marc Marquez in as many races at Misano and Aragon ensured that the deciding race of this year's MotoGP World Championship will once again be one of the three 'flyaway' rounds in either Japan, Malaysia or Australia. Okay, last year's title went down to the final GP, when Marc brought a 13-point lead back to Valencia, but otherwise the last time the series went the full distance was in 2006.

Prior to that you have to go back to 1993, when Kevin Schwantz wrapped up the title in the absence of the injured Wayne Rainey, whilst in 1992 it was Rainey who took advantage of an Mick Doohan's knackered leg to claim his third championship at the last opportunity. So really, before Valentino Rossi and Nicky Hayden's famous battle of eight years ago, the last two riders to go full strength into a final-race decider were Rainey and Eddie Lawson back in 1989. The point I am making is that it doesn't happen very often, which is a great shame, and the only real surprise about the MotoGP crown chase this season is that Marquez hasn't wrapped it up already.

British Superbike fans probably know where I'm going with this one because while MotoGP heads towards another intercontinental anticlimax as Europe sleeps, BSB is on course for a repeat of the final-round deciders that have defined the series since the introduction of a three-round Showdown in 2010. The basic premise is that the top six riders after nine events have their points reset to 500 - plus 'podium points' (5 for a win, 3 for second, 1 for third) - and then fight it out for the title over seven races across three high-stakes rounds.

For those that haven't followed this year's championship, Shane Byrne scorched into a dominant

lead with six wins and two second places from the opening eight races of the main season and after nine rounds he had built up a 107-point advantage over Josh Brookes, with Ryuichi Kiyonari 141 adrift in third place. Of course the format is set out from the start of the season and the riders are under less pressure to score big in the early rounds so these numbers don't tell the whole story but in theory - in a normal points format - the title would virtually have been Byrne's already.

As it is, following a dramatic start to the Showdown at Assen last week that saw Brookes non-scoring in both races and Shakey crash out of one, we now have Byrne lying just twelve points ahead of the in-form Kiyonari, who was able to spend the first half of the season building his pace on the BMW after a lifetime on Hondas, with five nail-biting sprints still to come (two at Silverstone and final-round triple-header at Brands Hatch). Just like it did last year, and has done every year since 2010, the 2014 MCE British Superbike Championship is going right to the wire.

Old habits die as hard as anywhere in the Grand Prix paddock and as something of a traditionalist myself I'm not saying MotoGP should necessarily adopt the 'Showdown'. But just think about what this format could do to increase interest towards the end of the season, boosting circuit attendances and television viewing figures for the flyaway races and setting up the enticing possibility of a final-race nail-biter in front of the Spanish crowd at Valencia to match the drama of last year.

Who knows? Maybe it could give Valentino Rossi a chance of winning the championship again? Now THAT might get Dorna's attention...

Elation of course but perhaps also a strange emotion also for Cal Crutchlow at Aragon who must have been hoping (but not expecting) to close a turbulent chapter of his career with some silverware. At the very least it proved he still has the goods in MotoGP





NO MORE RED FACES?

By David Emmett

Cal Crutchlow's podium at Aragon brings Ducati's total to three this year. That's the most the Italian factory has scored in a single season since Casey Stoner climbed off the Desmosedici at the end of 2010. Since the departure of the mercurial Australian, Ducati have floundered, finally faced with the truth that their bike was nowhere near the machine which Stoner's success made them think it was.

The arrival of Valentino Rossi in 2011 triggered a flurry of activity. The carbon fibre 'frameless' chassis design was abandoned, an aluminium perimeter frame adopted, the underbraced swingarm design of the Japanese factories copied, the engine changed to rotate the cylinders backwards. His parting triggered yet another burst of action. A radical management overhaul, the removal of Filippo Preziosi as head of Ducati Corse, the hiring and then firing of Bernhard Gobmeier to replace him, and yet another couple of redesigned engines and frames.

It had all made very little difference up until this year. Whatever they did to the bike, the results remained the same. At best it was capable of fighting with the mid-pack satellite bikes. In the three seasons since Stoner left, the bike made the podium just four times and missed out altogether in 2013.

What went wrong? It wasn't so much a question of hardware as of organization. Communication between the race team, the test team and the factory was virtually non-existent. Engineers studied

data instead of listening to riders or mechanics. They were more interested in the theoretical potential of the bike, rather than the actual results achieved.

The purge instituted by Audi after they purchased Ducati, and the hiring of Gigi Dall'Igna was a massive step forward for the factory. Dall'Igna spent the first three months of his tenure reorganizing the racing department, before turning his attention to the bike. With data now flowing more efficiently back and forth between factory and track, some real improvements have started to make their way onto the bike. The two factory riders – for all sorts of political reasons, that means Andrea Dovizioso and Andrea Iannone – have had two engine upgrades, two new frames and an assortment of other new parts. That has made the bike stronger on the brakes, easier to turn into the corner, and a little more stable on corner exit. Most of all, it has made it less tiring to ride. That has meant that the bike has been faster at the end of the race, riders not fading with fatigue.

Perhaps the most important difference between 2013 and 2014 is the riders. The Desmosedici is a very strange beast to ride: strong on the brakes, incredibly aggressive on the throttle, and with chronic understeer making it hard to hold a line. Everything you learned about riding a racing motorcycle, you have to unlearn once you jump on it. Cal Crutchlow's main difficulty this season has been spending each Friday learning completely different sets of lines and different approaches which the Desmosedici demands.



With a year's experience of the bike under their belts, things are easier for Dovizioso and Iannone. That shows in the results: Iannone has been outstanding in qualifying, getting the best out of the extra soft rear tyre Ducati can use. Dovizioso has been impressive over race distance, usually racing the same rubber as the Yamahas. They have been fortunate with the track conditions as well, both Dovizioso and Crutchlow taking advantage of mixed climates to score their podiums. But Dovizioso is now closer to the front of the race, and threatening to fight for a podium on merit.

The big test for Ducati comes next year. The 2015 Desmosedici will make its debut at the first Sepang test in February. That will be an all-new bike, designed from the ground up by Gigi Dall'Igna. Though Ducati are being cagey about releasing details of the machine, rumours emerging from Bologna suggest the only things that will remain are the Desmodromic valve gear and the 90° angle between the cylinders. So many alterations will be made that each rider will have only one bike. The target for that motorcycle is to erode the understeer. If it fails, then Ducati is in even more trouble than they are now. The future of the Italian factory in MotoGP rides on Gigi Dall'Igna's engineering prowess.





FEATURE



STUNT STAR: AARON COLTON

1 WHEEL MERCHANT

OTOR FOUND AN UNLIKELY STAR IN WEST HOLLYWOOD. MEET STUNT RIDER AND ALL-ROUND BIKE
SUPREMO AARON COLTON. A MAN WITH A THROTTLE AND LITTLE IN THE WAY OF LIMITS...

By Adam Wheeler

Portraits by Ray Archer/www.blog.ktm.com. Action by Crooker/St James/Red Bull Content Pool

In a modest but spotless abode in West Hollywood Aaron Colton is diligently preparing his KTM Super Duke 690s to get out on the road for his next stunt show. Fiancée/Agent/companion Daniela busies herself in the house. The couple could not be more accommodating and friendly but, generally, we have to admit that Aaron Colton would usually make most people – most motorcyclists – sick. The 23 year old boasts the feeling, co-ordination and balance on two wheels that most people will never know or enjoy. It is easy to feel envious. An off-roader, dirt-tracker and part-time road racer, the Minnesotan is a master of his trade – entertainment and competition on a bike – and it is without no small slice of irony that (co-incidentally) he rides with the same number as the current MotoGP Champion and speed wizard Marc Marquez.

Colton is Red Bull's darling when it comes to dazzling spectators with smoking tyres of a different kind. His videos and appeal have vast international appeal in the Americas and his Chicago elevated train system and Manila clips are quite stunning (click on the icon to see).

We were curious as how and why he fell into his profession and accrued the gamut of skills to become a major star that could soon be making waves in Europe. The link with KTM was also curious. We've seen Christian Pfeiffer shredding rubber with a BMW but the hi-jinks with a single cylinder Super Duke brought a different dimension to the Austrian's Street line-up and helps him stand apart...

Competition was my main drive but when I started riding for a crowd and my own enjoyment my style changed.

It got to the point when I started talking back and forth with Red Bull and they were keen to make a demo programme. I still compete but the demo stuff led into some really interesting projects and video edits. I've taken everything that I've learned competing and put it into an exhibition; it is great I am actually able to do that for my daily ride and make a living from it in the States.

I got on a street bike back in 2005 when I was thirteen and started doing some freestyle and then road racing.

I got my AMA licence and did some Supersport rounds at the end of the decade. I was still doing freestyle and then went into flat track and got my AMA Pro licence there. I've entered many different spheres of motorsports and it has helped me to become well-rounded, so if it comes to something like a Baja ride-out then I can hit the trail with a good group. I've diversified and a jack of all trades is something that I strive for because I want to be the best motor-sports athlete I can.



STUNT STAR: AARON COLTON





I really got into Flat Track because, well, you can go as hard as you possibly want! Road racing is all about finesse and you can charge hard, then in my sport you can do the same and there is a little bit of leeway to get away with being aggressive. Flat Track is a different ball game. Every track has a different equation, a different feeling and that's what frustrates me the most. I can go to Pomona for the National and win my Semi and get a top ten finish and feel great but then I go to Daytona only a couple of months later and not even qualify for the Main Event. It is a constant struggle but I feed off that frustration – I find that I don't really get it anywhere else – and it motivates me to want to get better. There are a lot of people that like to do it and they can ride short-tracks or they can ride half miles and then you have national champions that can do it all. I can say that I ride it well but also struggle at the top level. It's super-dangerous! I love the feeling of doing the miles and being so close to others at that speed but it's not perfect. It gives me a big 'raise' and it's very cool that KTM have also stepped forward to help with the singles for the flat track.

I got my first national championship win in 2006 and that was when I first started talking to Red Bull. I signed on January 1st 2007 with the view towards Christian Pfeiffer mentoring me in the States. We worked together and he really furthered my riding. Red Bull is a real premium brand and that's very important to me and my programme. The great thing about the way they work with their athletes is that – within reason – you can set your own goals. You can tell them what you'd like to do, or what you'd like to achieve and they'll help you get there. It is not just based on the competition results. Those [results] deals are good and I have competition incentives but it goes so much deeper with Red Bull. They have been one of the most influential elements of my career because they

believed in me when no other company did and it ended up working out great for both of us and I don't think I can ever be thankful enough.

I'm now using the KTM Super Duke 690; I think I have numbers '02' and '04' in the United States! The first thing I detected from people was 'Red Bull must have lined that up and he is being paid a lot!' To be honest there is not one rider who is competitive in our sport with a KTM. Internationally the reaction was very cool. I plan on making it a long relationship and I'm looking at the grand picture of their being many more orange motorcycles coming out in the next few years and there will be many opportunities. With bikes from other companies there are already parts that I need out there for purchase but this time I had to go down another path and design the components I require for the sport. So it took a bit longer to get the ball rolling. The single was hard to get used to! A lot of things I do is based on the low-end power delivery and sometimes raising or lowering the idle point. On a single it is chug-chug-chug whereas on a four cylinder it is smoother, like a sewing machine. It took some adaptation after eight years on non-singles and twins! It's going good and getting better.





STUNT STAR: AARON COLTON

I have a following in United States but I when I got to Bolivia or Brazil or Guatemala or Costa Rica then I need security! I think motorsports is maybe not so appreciated in the United States but when I look at my Facebook pages then most of my fans and followers are from places like Indonesia or South America. I think my international exposure is just as big as that in the United States, which is great. I reckon the area where my career is expanding the most is in international travel and events. The U.S. is a huge platform though and it is easy for me to do events all year long here too. I love both areas, especially the culture-shocks experiences of being abroad.

I think there is still a lot of ground to explore with freestyle. If you look at FMX there are definitely more participants, consistently, than my sport. When I used to compete in 2005 or '06 there would be around 240 competitors, now, because the level has increased so much, there is around 6-8 top guys and only 15 are going to make the show. I spend a lot of time off-road and I have a trials bikes and it has helped evolve what I am doing into more 'bike control and flow' than just a specific trick. There are many guys now who have found that this is the way to go. FMX started becoming bigger at the turn of the century whereas my sport has only recently started ramping up. There is a long way to go, and things like the video projects means I am able to go to some incredible locations and do things on the bike that other people in the sport will not get the chance to do. Hopefully it will create a platform to make the sport grow further.



FOX

Fox's new 2015 Comp 8 boots involved a fetching four colour line-up (our pick is the Red/Black combo) and one of the main selling points for the footwear involve the degree of comfort the rider can enjoy right out of the box. We've yet to see how they'd match up against some of Alpinestars' finest but other selling points for the American's latest offering, only a few weeks after releasing details of their advance V4 helmets include: improved ankle support with zero bulging, instinct buckle system with 2-into-1 strap, injection moulded plastic on the shin, calf and medial, exclusive Duratrak outsole, integrated steel shank in mid-sole for extra support. The Comp 8 should be shipping now and more information can be seen on the microsite

www.foxhead.com/comp8/







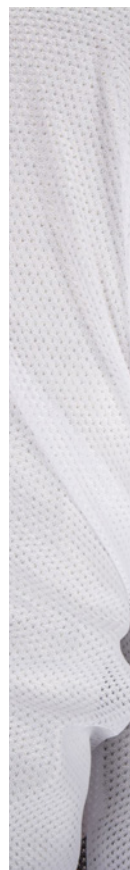
LEATT

A first look at Leatt's radical attempt to enter the large and competitive helmet market. The safety-conscious firm have chased a special design with their GPX that is of course chiselled to be a perfect fit with neck protection and also has fitting provision for a hydration system. It boasts Leatt's '360 degree Turbine Technology' which 'improves energy impact absorption at concussion level and improves protection against multiple impacts. Initial Lab testing show a 30%-50% reduction in energy transfer to the head at concussion level. The turbine design allows movement of the outer shell during impact, limiting the rotational forces to the skull and brain by up to 20%.'

We saw the first models at the Intermot show on Tuesday and the shell is noticeably smaller and lighter than other brands. This is not by accident. Leatt state: 'Shell size, neck forces and rotational brain acceleration go hand in hand. A 20% smaller outer shell can reduce the momentum and the rotational energy to the head, brain and neck by up to 40%.' Expect some more news soon...









ALPINESTARS



Alpinestars were at it again at the Motocross of Nations. After a surprise offering at the Catalunya MotoGP to commemorate the 2014 World Cup the Asolo boot department were busy once more for the Motocross of Nations. Tech10s were blasted with new colours and special designs for the company's leading athletes based around national flags and icons like Cockerels, Kangaroos, Centurions and Samurai. Team GBR's Shaun Simpson and Dean Wilson used a bright blue (the first time the 10s had been sprayed in such a shade) with a clock scheme riffing on Big Ben. Away from the footwear and the Techstar riding gear was also being personalised. Eli Tomac enjoyed an Abraham Lincoln themed kit while Akira Narita was apparently so pleased with his Godzilla motif that the Japanese wanted the design altered so more of the fictional monster was visible.





ARAI

The Japanese brand is pushing forward with the range and design diversity for their most advanced off-road lid yet: the MX-V. Some fresh schemes for 2015 are now available with the Scratch and Tip in four different shades. With its R75 concept on the brand new convex shell, emergency release system and enough venting not to have to worry about sweat pouring into goggles this is a classy piece of kit.

<http://www.araihelmet-europe.com/site/3673/arai-mx-v-now-available/>





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Monster Energy Girls
by Marian Chytka







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'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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